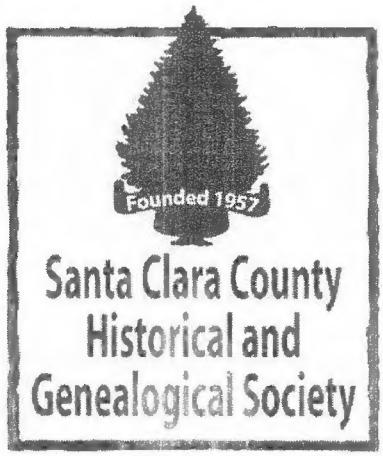
Madrone Springs

By John Pusateri

Written as part of the Federal Writers' Project, a Works Progress Administration (WPA) Project, 1936

Notes:

- Original in possession of the Santa Clara County Archives, San Jose, California
- Scanned by the Santa Clara Historical and Genealogical Society



American Guide
District #9
Sydney Russ

July 16, 1936

59

S-680

MADRONE SPRINGS

The formerly well known Madrone Springs are located about twenty five miles southeast of San Jose, in the Coast Range at an elevation of two thousand feet, in a picturesque and sheltered canyon at the foot of Pine Ridge.

Free from fog, with a mild climate, the surrounding mountains are covered with Pine, Oak, Madrone, Maple and Laurel and a number of species of medicinal plants are to be found in the immediate vicinity of the Springs.

The main spring is chiefly natural soda water, but also contains iron and magnesia. Two other springs are also located on the property. Of one, the main ingredients are iron and arsenic and the other is a white sulphur spring.

The springs were discovered by Juan Moreno while hunting in 1866. He did nothing with his find until 1868, when he was joined by John Luce an old mountaineer. Together they built a log cabin. This cabin built of square hewn logs, mortised at the corners, is still standing and is a monument to the patience and ingenuity of the early day settlers.

The early tradition in regard to the Madrone Springs, is that they were evidently known to the Indians, and were no doubt the "Medecine Waters" of one of the tribes, as many relics in the way of mortars, hatchets, arrow heads, and other flint implements were found in profusion in former days.

C. S. Adams of Gilroy purchased Morena's interest in 1874 and erected four cottages which still remain, but did nothing to advertise the springs as a health resort. In 1879 he bought the interests of John Luce and Dr. Clinton Munson of Oakland, visited the springs, and was greatly benefited, and in conjunction with Marshall Hunter of Gilroy bought the Springs from Adams. They improved the property by erecting more cottages

S-680

MADRONE SPRINGS
(Continued)

and a two-story building to be used as a sanitarium, Dr. Munson residing on the property to administer to the wants of the many patients who began to visit the resort.

During its heyday, a stage made four trips daily from Madrone station on the main line of the Southern Pacific Railway.

The Springs are located thirteen miles east of the U. S. 101 highway are reached by leaving San Jose from the south, and taking Cochrane Road at its junction with U. S. 101 just north of the entrance to the Madrone underpass, turning east and following the road to its end at the Springs. Picnic parties will find this an ideal days outing being a lovely drive, and at the Springs barbecue pits, plenty of pure water, and delightful scenery. A charge of 50¢ per car is made for all visitors, which includes all facilities.

The Springs are owned at the present time by Mr. Blabon, and are used for a headquarters for Mr. Blabon and his friends during the deer hunting season and for picnic parties, no effort being made to reestablish them as a health resort.